

**CLAIM AMENDMENTS**

1. (currently amended): A method to ~~protect a base material from degradation~~ prepare the composition of claim 9, said method comprising
  - a) applying ~~[[a]]~~ the water-insoluble substance to the base material,
  - b) optionally applying a growth substrate for growing a micro-organism to the base material; followed by
  - c) applying ~~[[a]]~~ the micro-organism layer to the base material.
2. (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein step a) is conducted in the presence of a heated medium at a temperature in the range of 30 to 240°C.
3. (previously presented): The method of claim 1, which further includes the step of drying at a temperature in the range of about 100-140°C, after step a).
4. (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein in step a) at least part of the water-insoluble substance is applied by impregnation into the base material.
5. (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein in step a) the water-insoluble substance is applied as a mixture comprising the water-insoluble substance and a solvent for the water-insoluble substance.
6. (previously presented): The method of claim 5, wherein the solvent is selected from the group consisting of alcohols, ethers and ketones.
7. (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the growth substrate is applied in a layer together with the micro-organism and/or as a separate layer between the base material and the micro-organism before step c).
8. (canceled)

9. (currently amended): A composition of matter which comprises a base material provided with a coating of a water-insoluble substance at the surface, and a ~~covering~~ micro-organism layer covering said coating

wherein the base material is construction material, building material, garden furniture, façade element or façade cladding,

wherein the covering microorganism layer comprises microorganisms having a pigmentation system; and

wherein said microorganisms fully cover the base material so as to provide the surface of the base material with a uniform color.

10. (previously presented): The composition of claim 9, wherein the water-insoluble substance at least partially impregnates the base material.

11. (previously presented): The composition of claim 9, wherein at least part of the water-insoluble substance is present in a layer on top of the surface of the base material.

12. (currently amended): The composition of ~~claim 9~~ claim 11, wherein the water insoluble layer has a thickness in the range of 1-1000 µm.

13. (previously presented): The composition of claim 9, wherein the water-insoluble substance comprises at least one component selected from mineral oils and waxes, vegetable oils and waxes and animal oils and waxes.

14. (currently amended): The composition of ~~claim 13~~ claim 9, wherein the water-insoluble substance comprises at least one C4 to C32 saturated or unsaturated fatty acid-ester.

15. (previously presented): The composition of claim 9, wherein a growth substrate is present in the micro-organism layer, and/or in a growth substrate layer between the micro-organism layer and the base material.

16. (previously presented): The composition of claim 15, wherein the growth substrate comprises carbohydrates and/or proteins.

17. (previously presented): The composition of claim 9, wherein the thickness of the micro-organism layer is less than about 1000  $\mu\text{m}$ .

18. (previously presented): The composition of claim 9, wherein the micro-organism layer comprises at least one bacteria or fungi.

19. (previously presented): The composition of claim 18, wherein the micro-organism layer comprises *Aureobasidium spp.*

20. (previously presented): The composition of claim 9, wherein the base material is wood, concrete, ceramic or stone.

21-23. (canceled)